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United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

13 August 1998

HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNMENT OF INDONESIA SIGN AGREEMENT ON TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Programme Officer Will Have Access to All of Indonesia; Understanding Reached on Facilitation of Access to East Timor

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Government of Indonesia signed this morning in Geneva a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for cooperation in the promotion and protection of human rights.

Under the agreement, which takes effect today and is valid for two years, the Office will cooperate with and assist the Government in the implementation of a number of technical cooperation programmes. The personnel assigned to this project - to be based in the office of the United Nations Development Programme in Jakarta -- will have access to all parts of Indonesia in order to be able to assess priority needs. This is understood to include facilitating access to East Timor.

The technical cooperation to be extended by the Office will cover the areas of the Indonesian national plan of action for the promotion and protection of human rights and the strengthening of national capacities; human rights education; the Indonesian National Human Rights Commission and strategies for the realization of the right to development and economic, social and cultural rights.

Progress in the implementation of the various programmes envisaged in the agreement, which is renewable, will be measured through semi-annual reports to be submitted to the Office and to the Government.

Today's agreement signals the successful conclusion of a process started in 1994, when the then High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights and the Indonesian Government signed a memorandum of intent on cooperation for the development and implementation of national programmes for the promotion and protection of human rights. The MOU also comes in the wake of the official launching on 25 June 1998 of Indonesia's human rights National Plan of Action.

The MOU was signed by High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson and Indonesia's Permanent Representative in Geneva, Ambassador Agus Tarmidzi. The High Commissioner welcomed the agreement and expressed the hope that it would contribute to addressing the urgent concerns regarding human rights in Indonesia.

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Geneva, Switzerland

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